

A
SERMON
Preached before the
LORD ROSS,
HER MAJESTY'S
COMMISSIONER,
AND THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
CHURCH of SCOTLAND;

In the New Church of *Edinburgh*, on the 16 of March 1704.

Which was the day of the convening of the General Assembly.

By *Mr. GEORGE MELDRUM*,

One of the Ministers of *Edinburgh*.

EDINBURGH,

Printed by *George Mosman*, and are to be sold at his Shop in the
Parliament Closs. M. DCC. IV.

SEER MON

LORD ROSS

COMMITTEE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

In the Year of our Lord 1844, in the Month of May, at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, held at Edinburgh, the following Resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That the following be the

Officers of the Church of Scotland for the Year 1844.



EDINBURGH

Printed by George Thomson, 10, St. Andrew's Street, Edinburgh.

SERMON Upon

1 Pet. 5. Chap. Verse 1, 2, 3, 4.

The Elders which are among you, I Exhort, who am also an Elder and a Witness of the Sufferings of Christ, and also a Partaker of the Glory that shall be Revealed.

Feed the Flock of God which is among you, taking the Oversight thereof not by Constraint, but willingly; Not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind.

Neither as being Lords over Gods Heritage, but being Ensamples to the Flock.

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory, that fades not away.

THIS Text Preacheth, tho I should speak nothing; It is a large Text, all that can be expected, and perhaps fit for me, in such an Auditory is to be your Remembrancer, of the chief Things contained in it.

In these first Four Verses which contain an Exhortation and Encouragement to Ministers for the Faithful Discharge of their Duty. You have 1st. A Pathetically Insinuating Preface Verse 1st. 2^{dy}. A serious Exhortation to the Faithful Discharge of their Duty, with a Dissuasive from some incident Evils, chiefly Idleness, Coverousness and Pride, Verse 2, 3. And 3^{dy}. To excite to their Duty, (beside Arguments all along insinuated) he proposeth Verse 4, the great Reward which Faithful Ministers may expect. I shall speak of the Words as they ly in order, and with the Expectation, give some brief Hints at what is observable for our Instruction and Practice, as your Remembrancer, and not your Teacher and Instructor. To return then.

A

In

In the Preface Verse first, you have 1st. the Persons exhorted (the Elders &c.) there are some so called because of their Age Verse 5, others because of their Dignity, either Civil, as 2 Chron. 19, 8. or Ecclesiastick, as here, and chiefly teaching Elders, and Pastors and Ministers of the Word, being to feed the Flock &c. Called Elders perhaps, because they were chosen of such, as were of more maturity of Age, or considerable standing in their Profession: I know Timothy was a young Man, but a singular One. Sure it is to be wished they be, not *Juvenes moribus*, but that for Wisdom, Experience and Gravity, they be such as deserve that Reverence and Respect, which is suitable to the Aged.

Here ye are to understand the Pastors, Teachers and Ministers, which were among these scattered Strangers. The best of Men even those, whose Office it is to Teach others, have need to be stirred up to their Duty &c. and a due Frame of Spirit and Behaviour in the Elders, is of prime concern for the Good of the Church. We may also see God can keep a standing Ministry, and Ordinances among a People when in an Afflicted, Scattered, Exiled Condition, and that is a great Mercy when it is so *Isa. 30. 20.*

But I proceed to the second Particular, The Person Exhorting, the Holy Apostle Peter the Penman of the Epistle: *Ch. 1. 1.* Described here by 3 Things: 1st. From this that he had the same Office with them, he was also an Elder there *o Synagoga summa*, Peter never claimed any thing extraordinary above the rest of the Apostles, nor in what was ordinary, above other Ministers, no word of Supremacy, but great Humility and Condescendence; such Exhortations, are like to have most weight, and Pastors should mutually exhort and excite one another to their Duty.

2^{dly}. He is described by this [*he was a Witness of the Sufferings of Christ*] and eye Witness of what Christ suffered, and a Teacher of it to others, and a Martyr, suffering for Christ; and the Exhortation of such, should be much regarded; a Spiritual View of Christ crucified is necessary especially to Pastors.

3^{dly}. He is described from his being a Sharer and a Partaker with them, and other Believers of that Bless and Glory, which the Lord Jesus Christ hath purchased for, and would bestow on them in due time, tho' now hid, it should be revealed; he was persuaded of his present Right, and of his Future full Possession. He had the first Fruits of it presently, and Faith made the full Crop as present *Neb. 11. 1.* Hence Observe, God hath prepared great Bliss and Glory, for his people after this, in Heaven. 2^{dly}. It is now hid, but shall in due time be revealed. And 3^{dly}. In this Life Believers attain to some Beginning of it. And 4^{thly}. May attain here, to Evidence of their Right, and assured Persuasion of full Possession hereafter. Give Diligence

gence for it *1 Pet. 1. 10.* *1st.* The Counsel of such should be much regarded, whom we see to be granted of God here, and like to be Heirs of Glory hereafter. The force of a Partakers Exhortation is great, but that is dead and dull, which floweth not from inward Persuasion and Experimental Knowledge.

I proceed next to the Exhortation, where you may notice, *1st.* The Duty exhorted to, *(feed)* *2dly.* The Object *(the Flock of God which is among you)* *3dly.* A Mean to do it aright, or another expression of the Duty *(taking the Oversight thereof.)* And *4th.* The manner how, in six Directions, whereof one is still Negative, another Positive, *1st.* Not by Constraints. But *2dly.* Willingly. *3dly.* Not for filthy Lucre. But *4thly.* Of a ready mind. *5thly.* Not as being Lords over Gods Heritage. But *6th.* As Ensamplers of the Flock. And of these I shall speak in order, beginning at the second The Object, because in order of nature before the First.

The Object then of this Care, and Feeding and Oversight, is the Church, called here the Flock of God which is among you. Some render *among*, as much as *in you* *yeach*, but our Version is the more received.

The Word *ποιμαίνω* properly signifies, a Flock of Sheep; but the Spirit of God doth frequently in Scripture make use of this Metaphor, concerning the Church and People of God, when he is expressing Gods Care of his People, or the Charge He giveth to Ministers, who are called Sheperds and Pastors. *Joh. 10. 1. 26. 28.* Observe then, Gods Church and People are his Flock, the Sheep of his Flock, of whom He taketh Care, as a Shepherd of his Sheep. *Plal. 79. 13.* And *80. 1.* *Micah 7. 14.* And *Ezek. Ch. 34.* chiefly *See last* And *Joh. Ch. 10.*

This may be *1st.* Much for the Comfort of the Church and People of God. So *2dly.* It should excite all Christians to carry and behave, as becometh his Sheep, hear His Voice and follow Him. *Joh. 10. 3. 4.* And *3dly.* It should excite Ministers, to Holy Diligence and Care of the Church, as the Flock of God, and the Sheep of His Pasture.

But I hasten to speak of the second Particular, the Duty exhorted to, and that is to feed them. Feed the Flock of God: The Word *ποιμαίνω* signifies properly, to Feed as a Shepherd; yet it is metaphorically used, for to Govern and Rule, and sometimes of Kings. *Math. 2. 6.* *Rev. 19. 15.* But a Word of a double signification, is to be understood, according to the subject matter spoken of; so that as *Joh. 21. 16.* so here it is to be understood of Spiritual feeding of Souls, by the Ministry of the Word, and other Ordinances of Christ, and will include also Ruling not like a Lord and King, forbidden *1 Pet. 2. 2.* but as a Guide. And indeed feeding as a Shepherd doth the Sheep, includeth both Feeding and Governing, and Guiding by the

Pots,

Pots, and into fit Pastures, Directing and Defending, but with Weapons that are Spiritual; And indeed the Sheep of the Flock, have not more need of Pasture and Care, than the Souls of Gods People have to be Fed, and Led and Guided by the Ministry of the Word. The *Papish* Plea for Peter and the Bishop of Rome, as pretending to be his Successor from *John* 21. 15, 16, 17. *Feed my Sheep* For Peter and the Bishop of Rome's Supremacy, I say, is vain and groundless; for as they can never prove the Succession of the Bishop of Rome to Peter in any such Privilege, so the Words settle no such Privilege on Peter; We see it is a Charge given to all Pastors to feed Christ's Sheep, here, and *Acts* 20. 28. It is true every Pastor hath not such an ample Commission as the Holy Apostles, but there is not by these Words any peculiar Privilege given to Peter beyond the rest of the Apostles: It is true he speaks to Peter by Name; and thrice repeateth it; because of his Threefold Denial of his Master, and for his Comfort reneweth his Commission; But as ample a Commission is given in proper Terms to all the Apostles *Math.* 28. 19 20. Yet every Individual was not committed to every one, for that was impossible to do, and they did by Divine Direction part the Work *Gal.* 2. 7. God hath given to Ministers of the Word a Charge to feed his people; yea and every particular Minister of the Gospel, hath this Charge given to him from God, to feed that particular Flock over which God hath set him; so here [*feed the Flock of God which is among you*] *Act.* 20. 28 *Jer.* 23. 2, 4. *Ezek.* 34. 2. *Jer.* 3. 15. *John* 21. 16. One tendereth the Word in the Text *Pastores agite* prove and shew your selves Good Shepherds, do the part of faithful Shepherds of Gods Flock.

The Lord Jesus Christ himself is the chief Sheperd, whose the Sheep are; but he hath Servants and Ministers to whom he gives Charge of his Flock, *to Feed and Guide them*; and their Work and Duty may be gathered from *Ezek.* 34. 4, 16. To be *1st*. To gather in them that are without. *2^{dly}*. To feed them and keep them when in. *3^{dly}*. To keep them from straying and reduce when straying. *4^{thly}*. To keep them from Hurt by Wolves and Diseases and Vice. And *5^{thly}*. to heal if they fall into them.

To *Feed them*, is as much as to use all the means of Gods appointment, to procure the Edification and Salvation of the Church, *Eph.* 4. 12. &c. By Preaching, Praying, Praising, Sacraments and Discipline, aiming in all at feeding and edifying, and though I exclude none of them, yet that which I conceive to be chiefly meant, is *the dispensing of the Word, both in publick and private.* *2 Tim.* 2. 15. *Math.* 24. 45. *2 Tim.* 4. 1, 2. to which the rest may be reduced. That Life which is conveyed to them by the Word of Life, by the Ministry of poor men, is by the same means preserved and advanced *1 Pet.* 1. 23. & 2. 2. and that which they are charged

charged to feed, is *the Flock of God*, even that which he hath purchased with his own Blood *Ab. 20. 25.* Souls, Immortal Souls, for which Ministers and Ordinances are appointed, for whom Angels Minister *Heb. 1. 14.* and whom Satan seeks to destroy *1 Pet. 5. 8.* Souls which must be Eternally Happy, or Eternally Miserable.

And this charge is given to Ministers, as they would testify their Love to Christ, *John 21. 16.* have they not then reason to look to it, that they give the Flock wholesome Food, not Poyson nor Wind, but the pure and wholesome Word of God, to Feed with Knowledge and Understanding, *Jer. 3. 15.* declaring to them the whole Counsel of God, but insisting chiefly on the great and necessary things, *Math. 23. 23.* Preaching Christ, and him Crucified, *1 Cor. 2. 2.*

Such had need to be well nourished in the words of Eternal Life themselves, to eat the little Book, and there being in Gods Flock, a great variety of persons, as to Age, Quality, Relation, and among all these persons of different inward Tempers, each one of which, must have their portion according to the great Masters allowance, Milk to Babes and strong Meat to them who are of Age, *Math. 24. 45.* *Luke 12. 42.* and *2 Tim. 4. 1, 2.* In order to which it is requisite the Pastor and Shepherd take inspection of the Flock, and labour to be acquaint with their particular cases which is implied in the second expression of their duty in the Text, (*taking the oversight thereof*) *Emendatus*, acting as the Bishops and Overseers of the Flock. Some note it as blameable in the *English* Translators that they Translate *Emendatus* in the singular, *Bishop*, but in the Plural, for most part *Overseers*.

God hath given to Ministers, the Charge, Inspection, and oversight of his Flock, the Souls of his People, *Ab. 20. 28.* and this implyeth both Inspection and Prospection.

1. This Oversight implyeth an accurat Diligent Inspection of, and inquiring into, and observing the Case of the Souls, committed to the Pastors Charge, this is *Emendatus*, this is to play the Scripture Bishop, or Overseer, *1 Pet. 5. 3.* *Ab. 20. 28.* as set on a Watch Tower, to look round about to the Flock, and each Soul therein, to discover their Spiritual Condition, and the state of Souls in a Congregation, is very various, some Converted, some Unconverted, some Ignorant, some Knowing, some fallen, or ready to fall into an Error, or Vice, some Weak, some Strong, some Secure, and Self-confident, some under Soul-Trouble, some walking in the Joy of the Lord, some Thriving, some Declining, this should be noticed and observed, and their various Condition and Relation, and their Behaviour therein, and what Fruit the Word of God hath, unto all which

it

it were needful to know each one in the Flock, as much as is possible, for to divide to each one their Portion, but the greatness of some Congregations, and frequent Removals, maketh it impossible in some places. But their should be endeavour for more Ministers, and as much as can, Visiting Families, Converse with particular Persons, and enquiring at others, but not lightly believing every Report.

See what is implied in this Inspection, and over whom, and judge you if this Scripture-Bishop and Overseer can be the Bishop of a Diocese.

It is undeniable, that Bishop and Presbyter in Scripture, have the same common Names; and the same Qualification to their Office, and the same Ordination, and the same Work and Duty required of them; so that in Scripture they are one and the same Officer: And in the *Primo* Primitive Times its undeniable, that Bishops were *Episcopi* *Gregis* and Overseers of a particular Flock. *Polycarp* Bishop of *Smyna* did know all his Flock by Name &c. See *Ignatius Epistle ad Polycarp.*

2. This Oversight implyeth Prospection, as well as Inspection, a Holy care to do all they can to prevent the hurt, that the Souls of their People are in danger of, either by Error or Vice, and to promote their good and edification in Faith and Holiness, their Sanctification and Salvation, and the Glory of God therein. And this by the due use of the Word, and Sacraments, and Prayer, in publick, and in private, by visiting Families, and private Conference, Instructing, Counselling, Comforting, and admonishing, of Error or Vice, or of neglect of Duty, and inciting and encouraging to Duty; in visiting the Sick, and Praying over them, and by due Exercise of Discipline, as is needful and for Edification.

Here being a great variety of Persons, Cases, and Duties, there is need of much Prudence Vigilance, and Diligence, and cause to cry out as *1 Cor. 16. Who is sufficient for these things?* Here so great, so manifold, and difficult a Work, that it was no wonder that *Chrysostom* on *Act. 3.* did with much seriousness profess, that he thought there were not many Ministers that were saved, but many more that did perish. But what is impossible to Men, is possible to God. But who of us have not cause to be humbled, for our Sins and Short-comings, in our Ministration, and to Pray, *inter nos in the Judgement, with thy Servant, O Lord.* Let us humble our selves and beg pardon, and resolve to be more diligent, and Faithful, to get and keep on our Hearts, a deeper sense of the greatness of our Work, and strictness of our account *Heb. 13. 17.* what need is there to mind, *1 Thes. 4. 26.* and *Act. 20. 28.* Let us take heed to our selves, that we be sincere, and fervent Christians, and be not Strangers to that Christ, and Faith, and Holiness, which we preach to others.

Let

Let us labour to be good Men, and by Prayer and Study, to be able Ministers of the New Testament. This we should do, ere we enter, and when entered on the Ministry; Let us labour for, and grow in Love to God; and to the Souls of people, and with all possible Seriousness, do what we can, for the Good of Souls, seeing the time is short, and Adversaries many. And for this Improve all the Ordinances, and Means of Grace, Word, Sacraments, Prayer, Discipline &c. And take heed we degenerate not to Formality in them. Of all which, I had occasion some Years ago, to speak at more length. And shall now only say, we should do what we can, for the Churches Good, each of us apart, and also when met together in Church Judicatories.

And 1st. Seeing Ignorance doth too much abound among many, I commend 1st. A prudent Diligent Use of Catechising, and Instructing in the Principles of Religion, and of the Grounds and Reasons of our Belief, and to excite Parents and Masters to help in this. 2^{dly}. Perhaps it were useful, both for Pastors and People, that there were more frequent preaching of Catechetical Doctrine. And 3^{dly}. I wish there were more of the publick Reading of the Scripture, and that our Lectures were not confined to a few Verses, contrary to the first design of them. 4^{thly}. Excite all to read the Scriptures, and young ones especially to Learn to Read. And 5^{thly}. I pray let it considered, what more may be done to promote the Knowledge of God in the *Highlands*. You may hear perhaps what some Charitable Persons in our Neighbour Nation of *England*, have done for this, and what some Synods among our selves have done, and what the late Commission projected, it will deserve a particular Committee to consider of this, and it will be our Sin and shame, if we let good Projects fall, and that we be asleep and negligent when Popish Priests, are so busy among them.

2. Seeing Vice, and Prophaneness and Immorality, doth so much abound, it deserveth consideration, what more may done for the restraint of Vice, and more vigorous Exercise of Discipline, for purging the Church of Scandals, it is not without cause regretted that Discipline is turned into a form of publick appearing for so many days, to the hardning of the Scandalous, and the Offence and Grief of the more Judicious, and Sober.

3. Seeing we are in such Danger, by Popery, yea and Atheism and Infidelity, it concerns us to consider what may done to stop the Growth thereof, for I apprehend we are in as great dangers in any time since the Reformation, especially considering the state of Affairs Abroad, and that the Divisions of Protestants, give them no little advantage, to Ruine the Church and the Protestant Religion. It were good that Ministers would study these Controversies, and both in private and publick, inform and guard the People against these Abominations.

4thly. Seeing it seemeth the Anger of the Lord hath divided this Nation, it concerneth us to do what we can, to repair Breaches which are, and to prevent more: It were to be wished, there were more of a Disposition for Peace among all true Protestants; But ah there is too little of it; yea some suspect each Motion of Peace, as Lukewarmness, and few grow zealous for it, till they grow old, and Experience teach them the ill of Division.

The great Use of Synods, is to maintain the Peace and Concord of the Church and carrying on the Work of God with Unanimity. Let us be careful to maintain Peace and Unity and Concord among our selves, and promote it among the people, this will be our Comfort, Strength and safety. But Division would be our Disgrace, our Enemies Joy, and our own Ruine, we know how it Ruined the Government of the Church formerly, and our Concord hitherto hath been our Strength.

And for the Churches Peace, let us endeavour to Maintain a good Understanding, betwixt the Magistrate and the Church: JESUS CHRIST the King and Head of his Church, hath settled in It, Order and Government, distinct from the Civil: Yet it is an unvaluable Mercy, when there is allowed the countenance of Civil Authority, and that promise *Isa. 49. 23.* is accomplished, and Kings shall be thy Nursing Fathers and their Queens thy Nursing Mothers. And it is our great Mercy that we have a Protestant Queen, who is so stedfast and Zealous for the Protestant Religion. And tho of different Education as to Church Government hath been so favourable to this Church. And I think I may say, no Reformed Church hath more of the countenance of Authority, Her Majesty seeketh our Peace and Welfare, and did in the last Session of Parliament ratify Religion, and the Presbyterian Government of this Church, and now countenanceth the meeting of the National Assembly at the time appointed, and hath sent a Noble Person Friendly to our Interest, to represent Her Royal Person among us, and I hope we shall have no Interruption in our Affairs; that which happened last, was surprizing and grievous, yet I am perswaded on no ill Design to us; And we have cause to Bless GOD, and be thankful to the Queen and Parliament, for what we have received since; both in Parliament and Her Majesties late Gracious Letter, to Her Council; These who were on the last Commission, know the struggles and fears, which were of subverting the Government of the Church, and how through Mercy they were disappointed. Our Peace and Preservation doth under GOD depend on the Queen, and the want of Her Countenance and Favour, would soon have ill Effects. And the Continuance of this Favour may depend much upon our own Conduct,

Perhaps this is as Critical a Time, as any since the Late Happy Revolution; considering the State of the Church and Nation, and of Affairs at Home

Home and Abroad; its a time of War, the Nation is much divided, many wait for our Halting, Intrusions and Incroachments in diverse places, where not Restrained by the Magistrate, and how would Adversaries insult, if we lose the Countenance of Authority: So that much of the Peace and Welfare of the Church, may depend on your prudent Conduct, we must not do any thing Sinful, but to do all we can without Sin.

It is undeniable, many aged, prudent, and faithful men, are removed of late, and some disabled to attend such Meetings, who might be of great use. Pray much for a double measure of the Spirit, and you who are the People, pray much for Pastors.

But I proceed to speak of the Directions in the Text: (And the first is, *not by constraint*) there is a constraint of love 2 Cor. 5. 14. but that is another word in the Original, and there is a necessity in respect of Gods Command 1 Cor. 9: 16. But this in the Text is the constraint of a Slave, for the whip, or a Drudge for his bellyful. Ministers must not undertake this work, as of necessity, for a Liveing, nor discharge it as of necessity, for fear of shame or Suffering from Men. For they who do so, will do their work but perfunctoriously, slowly, and coldly, and were it not for shame, or Censure from Men, would do little or nothing; here some think, the Apostle cautioneth against Sloth and Laziness.

But 2ly. *unwillingly*, as of choice as Exod. 36. 2. Be not about this work, as unwilling, whither through sloth or Laziness, or for the Difficulty of the work, but do it of choice, in love, and heartily, and willingly. God regards a little if with a *willing mind* 2 Cor: 8. 12. and ch: 9. 7. Ephes. 6. 7. Let it be from the heart, with affectionat desire to serve God, and save Souls, Psal. 40. 7, 8, 9. and Job. 4. 34.

3ly. (*Not for filthy Lucre*) here the Apostle taxeth Covetousness oft forbidden to Pastors Tit: 1. 7. 1 Tim: 3. 3, 8. This is a sordid Sin in any, but especially in a Minister, who is sent to call others off from the love of the World. Let not your motive or Principle, be *wordly gain*; let not that induce you to undertake, nor be your principal Encouragement to go on. Wordly gain is here called *filthy lucre*, and such is not only that, which is gotten by any unlawful means, of Fraud, or violence, by unlawful callings, or using a lawful calling unjustly, or of getting wages, and not doing the work, as Churchmen, that fleece, but do not feed the flock.

But 2ly. when the heart is set inordinatly upon worldly gain and wealth, it is made filthy by that inordinat affection. For, to an Impure heart it is Impure Tit: 1. 15; 16. and 1 Tim: 6. 9, 10. thus it may be also called *filthy*, in opposition to the high esteem that wordly Men have of it, and inordinat affection they have to it, this debaseth the Soul, and polluteth the gain.

zely. It may be called *filthy gain*, in comparison of the great gain, and glorious reward, and Crown of glory, which is prepared for them, that love Our Lord, and are faithfull to the Death, with which this is not worthy to be compared, *Matth: 16: 26.* and *2 Cor: 4: 18.*

I might here take occasion, to tax the filthy gain of the *Romish Church*, where they set to sale even their Holy things, witness that Distich.

Venalia Roma, templa, sacerdotes, altaria, sacra, Corona.

Ignis, ibura, preces, calum est venale Deusque.

And that concerning Pope *Alexander* the 6th,

Vendidit Alexander, claves, altaria, Christum,

Emerat ille prius, vendere jure potest.

Were not their Indulgences, Pardons, Reliques, hallowed Beads, Holy Water, Exorcisms &c. and especially the Fire of Purgatory, invented, and used to draw in money, from poor People, into their Coffers.

But I beseech all who would approve themselves Ministers of Christ, to abhorre *filthy lucre* and to flee from covetousness *1 Tim: 6: 11.* This is a sordid Sin in any, but especially in Ministers, who be sent to call off others from the love of the World. A wordly Minister is the basest dunghil worm in the World. Love not the World *1 Joh. 2: 15.* Let not your motive or Principle be wordly gain, let not that induce you to undertake, nor be your principall Encouragement to go on. I speak not against an honourable maintenance, which God alloweth *1 Cor: 9: v. 6. to 16.* But let not that be your motive. And look well to this, for tho' we have not great Livings, as Bilhopricks, Deanries, and Prebendaries, yet a wordly Heart will cleave to little, as well as to great Riches. Such are Hirelings and will not be faithfull nor stedfast, such will make Merchandise of the Word, and fall in to many snares. see *2 Cor. 2.* last *Matth: 6: 24.* *1 Tim. 6: 9, 10. Ezek: 13: 19.*

The 4th Direction [*But of a ready mind*] *ἡτοιμασμένης*, this tho' of affinity, with the former word, *involuntatis*, intendeth the signification of it; altho' there were no consideration of gain or glory, or the like. Love to God and Souls, which is the great qualification of a Pastor, should move to duty. His mind must be carried to it, as the thing he delights in. There may be reluctance to enter, because of the greatness of the work, and sense of insufficiency: and yet the man enters and continues with readiness of mind, with sincere desires of doing all he can, for God, and the Souls of Men: And

in

in sense of, and with grief for unfitness, and dependance for furniture, doing and using what he hath, and lying in wait, for every opportunity, and as he can, keeping himself in readiness and Disposition for it.

The 5th is [Not as Lords over Gods Heritage] Gods People are his *Clerus*, his Lot or heritage, so called, because Heritages of Old were divided by Lot.

The *Romish* Ecclesiasticks, do without ground appropriat this title of *Clergy* to themselves. Gods Church and People are *his Lot and Heritage* Deut: 32. 9. *Isai*: 63. 17. And the Flock of his heritage Micah 7. 14. This shews the great love of God to his People, and ministreth much comfort to them, and sheweth their Duty to behave as becometh such, who are so owned of God: And to chuse God for their portion, and heritage for ever *Psal*. 73. 26. and 119. v. 57.

Now the Apostle cautions Ministers, that they must not *Lord it over Gods heritage*, his Church and People. *Kαὶ οὐκ ὡς ἡγεμονεύει* doth not always signify Abuse of Power, and Tyranny, but signifies Lordly Magistratical Domination. And so the Vulgar Latin turneth it here, *Dominares*. Yea it is used sometimes of God, and Christ. It is not then only Tyranny or abuse of Power, that is here forbidden, but I conceive that under this is forbidden to Pastors,

1. Magistratical Civil Power and Authority. Their office is not *Magistracy*, but *Ministry*, see *Matth*. 20. from v. 25. and *Luke* 22 from v. 25. which condemns the Pope and Bishop of Rome, his Temporal Power, which he claimeth over Princes whether direct or indirect. As also Bishops their Civil and State Offices. see *Bernard ad Eugenium* lib. 2do. ch. 5. *I ergo tu, & tibi usurpare aude, aut Dominus Apostolatam, aut Apostolicus Dominatum: Plane ab alterutro prohiberis.*

2ly. Here is forbidden also, outward Grandour and greatness, worldly Dignities, Titles, Pomp, Retinues, Attendants, and State, usual among Princes, and great Men, in the State, as Titles of Lord and Grace, and also the chief Seats, and taking place of the great Men, Noblemen, and Officers of State *Matth*. 23. 6. &c.

3ly. Affecting preheminence, or arrogating undue Authority or power, over Brethren, Pastors or People like *Diotrephes* 3 *John* 9. 10.

Yea 4thly. A Magistratical Domineering way, of delivering the Word, or exercising Church Discipline, commanding as Masters *Matth*. 23. 8, 9, 10. Imposing as Lords over the Peoples Faith, 2 *Cor*. 1. 24. Not using a persuasive gentle way 1 *Thes*. 2. 7. But with the way of Compulsion and Violence.

ly. Here is forbidden all pride Ambition and vain glory. 1 Tim. 3, 6. 1 Pet. 5, 5, 6. Affecting what is undue, or overstraining, or tyrannical abusing due Authority, or seeking these Dignities or things, which sute not this Charge, which is a Ministry and not a Lordship.

Pride and Ambition is an abominable vice in any, especially in Ministers, who should be Patterns of Humility. Yet it is too natural to Man, and often hath too much place in the hearts of Churchmen. Even the Disciples of Christ were more than once taken with this temptation, mistaking Christs Kingdom, as if it were of this World, for which Our Saviour did reprove them, and caution against it.

The 6th Direction is (*But being Ensamplers to the Flock*) Examples to wit of Humility, and all piety. This is frequently recommended to Ministers 1 Tim. 4. 12. and is of great import for the Honour of God, and the Good of Souls. And the surest way to free Ministers from Contempt, and to beget a true Reverence for them, in the hearts of the People. Whereas Ministers ill lives exposeth them to contempt, and hinders the success of the Gospel. We must not only labour to preach well, but to live well, and cast a Copy of Humility, and piety, and peace, of all grace and vertue, and universal Holyness.

We have many peculiar Obligations to it, and Advantages for it, beyond other Men, and shall we be no better nor others? We should be Examples to others as 1 Tim. 4. 12. 1st. *In word* and communication, speaking to Edification Ephes. 4. 29. 2. *In conversation* and the course of our Lives, that our Actions may sute our words, and that our conversations be such as becometh the Gospel Philipp. 1. 27. 3. *In Charity*, walking in love to God and Men. 4. *In Spirit*, in the Zeal of your Spirits for God, and minding of Spiritual things. 5. *In Faith*, our works should shew our Faith, and we act Faith, by our preference of things unseen and Eternal. 6. *In Purity*, and all Holyness, and abstaining from Impure pleasures. Consider and transcribe the Example, which Our Saviour hath left us, both of doing and suffering, that you may be able to say, *Be ye Followers of me as I am of Christ*. Propose this Disposition, and Conversation, and Discharge of his Office, as a Teacher, for your Pattern to imitate; Take notice of, observe and meditate on, and endeavour to imitate, his humility meekness, and patience; and contempt of the World, his unwearied diligence, his great love to Souls, and desire of doing good, his zeal and prudence, his piety to God and respect to all his Ordinances, and Charity to Men, and in all his self denial. So put on the Lord Jesus, that you may shew forth his Vertues. And even in your meetings shew an example of gravity, and piety, of prudence and discretion, with your zeal, of
lov

love to truth and peace, of giving to God the things that are Gods, and unto Cesar the things that are Cesars.

I might bring many Motives to quicken to this. Diverse are insinuated in the Context, but I shall insist only on this v: 4. Here a Motive, or rather a bundle of Motives, yea every word a Motive. There is a higher Shepherd then you, the chief Shepherd; the Prince of Pastors. And this is both for comfort, and quickening. It's true he is now in Heaven, but he will come again, and be revealed in great Glory, and call you to an account of your Stewardship; and if you be faithful, he will reward gloriously, you shall receive *Glory*, and a *Crown of Glory*, and such a *Crown* that *fadeth not away*.

Consider 1. the strictness of the account, 2. the dreadful danger of the Unfaithful, and 3. the unspeakable Reward of the Faithful. See *Luke 12. 42.* and *Heb: 13. 17.* *Ezek: 3: & 33.*

If the testimony of a good Conscience here, breed so much peace, and joy, and comfort, what will the Masters Aprobation at the Great Day do; when he will say, *well done good and faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of your Lord.* Behold the Lord cometh, and his Reward is with him, be faithful to the death *Revel: 2. 10.* This may engadge to do and suffer *1 Cor: 9. 24, 25.* Oft faithful Ministers suffer here, and get unkind returns from them, for whom they spend and are spent *1 Cor: 12. 15.* But they that are faithful, may be confident, to have from their Master a great and glorious Reward. *Dan: 12. 2.* *A Crown of Glory that fadeth not away*, that is not like the Crowns of flowers, given to the Victor in Games, but is everlasting, and has with it fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

And this is for all them who love his Appearing, *2 Tim: 4. 8.*

Now the God of all Grace, grant that you may be found faithful, and wise Stewards, and may receive this Crown of Glory, which fadeth not away, through Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father and Holy Ghost, be praise and Glory for ever, and ever, AMEN.

F I N I S.

6 MA 50

